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SCIENCE

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THE NEW OPPORTUNITY IN SCIENCE¹

SINCE I had the good fortune to be somewhat intimately associated with many phases of scientific development work in this country in aid of the war, and also had exceptional opportunity, through reports which came weekly from the scientific attachés in London, Paris and Rome, to become familiar with similar developments in Europe, you will expect me to see the new opportunity in science in situations created by the war or in lessons taught by it. That expectation I shall endeavor not to disappoint. I shall accordingly introduce my subject by a brief review of the most noteworthy features of the methods employed and the results obtained in applying science to the needs of the great war.

That you may be under no misapprehension, however, regarding the importance of the rôle which I myself have played in these events let me begin with an incident of the summer of 1917. It was in the last week in March, 1917, that I gave up my academic duties and was called to Washington as vice-chairman of the National Research Council, charged particularly with the task of assisting in mobilizing the scientific men and the scientific facilities of the United States in aid of the war which was clearly coming, although it had not yet been declared. During the hectic months of the spring of 1917, when the civilian activities in aid of the war were directed by the Council of National Defense in the Munsey Building, I represented the Research Council upon the old Munitions Board and also

¹ A lecture given on July 25 before the summer session of the University of Chicago.